

## OUR CHICAGO LETTER.

I desire to give you a brief account of our Christmas dinner—it was a success. This was an independent work—done outside of Mission Boards and committees. We sent out a few personal requests, and in due time all our requests were honored. Boxes came from South Bend, Warsaw, Goshen and Milford Junction, Ind., Waterloo, Ia., and Lanark and Sterling, Ill. The provisions were abundant, though the getting them on time caused us some extra efforts, owing to the flood of expressage on such an occasion, but all is well that ends well, and when Christmas noon came we had plenty to eat.

As already stated, our room is a long one, and after setting three tables—each table sixteen feet long—we had plenty of room, but not enough table to seat the crowd. We issued written invitations for reasons, but our own friends and helpers did not need them—announcements to this effect being made from time to time. Some of our own families had made other arrangements previous to our announcements; others had their own family dinner, so that there were a number absent. However we had about one hundred and twenty to dine with us—some say one hundred and fifty. My own estimate may be a little under the number, but we had plenty, and while we did not have twelve baskets full left, we had sufficient to gladden the hearts of some hungry people who were not present.

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The young folks behaved very nice. We had no trouble to control them, and that is saying much, for when you get nearly a hundred boys and girls together, you have plenty to hear and do. But we had good success with the crowd and made lots of friends. The comments on the dinner were numerous and peculiar. One little fellow said he would like something for his mother who was very sick. When asked the trouble with her, said she had dropped a big plate on her toe. We sent her dinner, for a woman sick only in the toe, was not too sick to eat. What attracted so much attention in the community was the nature of the dinner. Some people expected a bowl of soup and slice of bread; in place of that we gave them a dinner such as you would eat in your own home, and we are hearing from it in numerous ways. This is practical work that the churches too often overlook.

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After services the other night, a lady came in and entered into conversation with Sister Quackenbush and my wife. She was the nurse of a young woman about eighteen years of age, who was a

helpless sufferer. She could not walk, read or talk—she could only look and hold communion with the outer world through the eye and ear. On Christmas day no offering was sent to her, and the nurse said she showed her disappointment in her face. No wonder. The women on Saturday night went out and bought a bouquet of flowers and Sister Quackenbush and Emma carried it to her on Sunday morning, and report a wonderful reception through the eyes of the afflicted girl. You young women who grumble at doing your mother a favor, and find fault with your surroundings, ought to see some of the sights we see. It would not take long to become reconciled to home and consecrated for Christ.

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That the suffering here is appalling, there can be no question. Organized charity, churches, and other organizations, are putting forth every effort, seemingly, to relieve the serious condition, and the devil is making use of the situation to extend his cause. Stealing and murders are of daily and nightly occurrence. If there ever was a time when the world needed help, that time is now. Some Waterloo friends sent in a box of clothing and we are applying it where it will do the most good. While we appreciate them and the efforts of the giver, yet what are these among so many? God who smiled on the boys' lunch of loaves and fishes, may smile on these efforts and increase them until many are helped. You remember in my last, speaking of a convert some did not have much faith in, since he first knew us he has saved money enough to get himself a suit of clothes. Who says that is not a straw in the right direction? Live yourself but help others to live.

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During the Christmas holidays our workers could not do much, but now we start anew. During the last two months I have learned the needs of the work and know better how to direct our forces to the object in view. I shall go forward and shall require every worker to do his and her share, and when they can not do that there will be only one thing to do, and that will be to do some other work. To do mission work successfully it must be done right or not at all, and being responsible to our Conference, I shall do it right and be subject to them for the consequences. I am glad that our two young men are not only scattering tracts, but they are preaching. Brother Hesse has preached twice and Brother Wright once. We will have them at it about once a week and will do our best to give them

the benefit of our experience, and train them as practical co workers for the extension of Christ's kingdom. I have my eye on others that ought to preach, and will use my efforts in that direction. They have the ability, and there is an opportunity. The church will sanction these efforts, and that is good enough call. Why not?

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I had a picture of the Mission taken and am trying to get a cut off in time for this letter. These were first at the Mission and are our regular attendants, members of our Sunday-school, King's Children and Sunday congregations, but a number of the latter not being present. We are slowly becoming known. Some members of the church have hunted us up, others we have gone after. Send to your friends and tell them where we are—384 S. Western avenue—easy to find and pleasant to visit. You see that we have not been idle, that we are making use of our time and doing the work for which we have been sent, then, if you have not been helping to bear our burdens, will you not do so? The work is so great and the means so scarce. If I and others have put our life in the work, can not you put in a little help?

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## Sisters' S. C. E.

## LACK OF SPIRITUALITY AMONG THE CHURCHES.

EMMA HOUSER.

I have for sometime been watching professing Christians for the one purpose of discovering any signs of spiritual life. I dislike to go any place where everything is dry, dull, or *dead*. If we watch sinners or people who make no profession, we nearly always find them alive to their work. Ready to go to balls, theaters, socials, or any other "pleasure seeking places," let it cost what it will. When they go to balls, they are not too lazy, indifferent, or afraid to dance. Oh, no! they are alive to their work. When they go to a social, they do not sit down so very quiet, make such a long, sober face, and tremble to think that it is their duty to sing or speak, to make the social a pleasant event. No, not at all! They are very active! But only watch some professors of Jesus Christ. In the first place they will allow a few of the leading members do the singing, the best way they can. I wonder if they ever think we are singing praises to God. The Apostle says, "I will sing with the *spirit*, and I will sing with the understanding also."